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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 2, 2003

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## George Budget Saves Taxpayer Dollars

*Senator George restores fairness to library funding*

LANSING - State Senator Tom George, R-Texas Township, announced today the passage of the budget for the Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) by the Senate Appropriations Committee. As chair of the HAL subcommittee, alterations made to the budget reflect George's ideas of how to better balance the needs of the department with the needs of the taxpayer.

By cutting special grants and reallocating the money to all libraries George was able to reduce overall spending, mitigate proposed cuts to all libraries and report a budget bill that is lower than the Governor recommended. The special grants George cut were to the Detroit and Grand Rapids Public libraries for the maintenance of special collections. George successfully argued that those special grants were no longer justified.

By moving dollars from the special grants to the line item funding all libraries, George eliminated the cut the Governor had proposed. During times of economic strife, library usage is expected to increase as patrons increasingly frequent libraries as they search for jobs or work to improve their skills.

"It is unfortunate that the Governor does not recognize the need to maintain state formula funding to all libraries during these difficult times," George said. "Instead, she has chosen the easy way out by recommending that all library funding be reduced by 6.5 percent. It is the legislature's task to make the difficult decisions the Governor could not make"